

XIII.—Notes on Various Indian Birds.

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[Continued from p. 85.]

657. *CORVUS CORAX*. European Raven.

Numbers of these birds may be found around Umballah in the cold weather; most of them disappear again, but some remain to breed. I found a nest in a large Banyan (*Ficus indica*), on the Native Infantry Parade-ground at Umballah, on the 28th March, 1866. It contained a nearly fledged young one, which was kept by my brother for some time as a pet. One of the old birds procured on that day measured as follows:—Length 24·75; wing 16·5; tarsus 2·5; extent 24; bill from front 3, height of bill at base 1·25; middle toe and claw 2; tail 9·625, cuneiform—the outer feathers shorter than the rest by 1. Irides dark brown.

660. *CORVUS CULMINATUS**. Indian Corby.

I shot a Crow in the act of chasing some small birds on the top of Mount Tongloo in 1862, which Mr. Blyth referred to this species; but I am inclined to doubt that it was so, on account of the elevation of the locality (10,000 ft.). It is common both at Barrackpore and in Maunbhoom, where it breeds in March, making a nest of sticks, and laying generally three eggs, like those of the English Rook, but perhaps more elongated, measuring 1·5625 by 1·1875.

This bird is very fond of “discoursing,” if I may so term it: he comes and sits on a bough over one’s tent, and talks away to himself in the most amusing manner, giving utterance to a variety of queer and, to us, incomprehensible sounds.

661. *CORVUS INTERMEDIUS*†. Black Hill-Crow.

This is the common species at Simla, and takes the place there of *C. culminatus* of the plains, than which it is decidedly

* [We are indebted to Lord Walden for a reference to Dr. Pucheran’s statement (R. Z. 1853, p. 547), from which it appears that this name, bestowed by Col. Sykes in 1832, must give way to that of *C. levaillanti*, given to the species in 1831 by Lesson (Tr. d’Orn. p. 328).—ED.]

† [Prof. Schlegel (Mus. P.-B., *Coraces*, p. 16) is inclined to refer this species to the preceding; but we are informed by Lord Walden that he regards it as decidedly distinct.—ED.]

smaller, and has a proportionally longer tail. In habits the two are much alike; but the Hill-Crow has a peculiarity (which I have not noticed in any other species) of soaring high in air of an evening, generally in circles, like the Kites and Vultures. Its croak, too, is quite distinct from that of *C. culminatus* in the plains. According to Col. Tytler, this species breeds at Simla in July and August, on the tops of the Deodars, making a nest of sticks, in which it lays two eggs; these resemble those of the allied species, but are elongated, and perhaps more longitudinally spotted. Two specimens measure respectively 1·875 by 1·1875, and 1·8125 by 1·1875.

663. CORVUS SPLENDENS. Common Indian Crow.

Abundant everywhere. Extends as far as Akyab certainly (J. A. S. B. 1863, p. 76). In Burmah proper (that is, lower down) it is replaced by a form which wants the grey neck (*cf.* Ibis, 1867, p. 35). The dimensions of a specimen killed at Moulmein in September 1865 are as follows:—Length 17; wing 10·375; tail 6·75; tarsus 1·875; bill from front 2·125; irides dark brown. At Umballah I have observed Crows in large numbers flying along the grand trunk-road over twenty miles of an evening for the sake of roosting in the station, returning in the morning the same distance,—a fact corroborated by Dr. Jerdon and the late Dr. Scott. This, however, only occurred in the cold weather, when the trees of a night were black with their numbers, and the odour of so many thousands close to one's sleeping-room was not pleasant. I have not observed them congregating in this way in any other part of the country that I have visited; and it is difficult to account for the object the birds may have in doing so, unless it be the warmth they mutually afford each other, which must be a consideration to these tropical birds in the early mornings of December and January, with the thermometer below the freezing-point.

The dimensions of four birds are as follows:—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Height of.	Spread ft.	Extent.
Simla,								
May 4, A.	19	11·5	8	2	2·25	·9375	3·25	34·
„ B.	19	12	8	2·25	2·25			
July 5, C.	19·75	12	8	2	2·125			
„ D.	19·75	11·75	7·75	2·125	2·125	·875	3·5	34·5

Head, nape, breast, and lower parts dull, dark brownish-black; back and upper tail-coverts partially so; wings and tail black, with purple reflections. Irides dark brown; orbital skin black, but below the eyes flesh-coloured. Bare skin on each side below the lower mandible, and at the gape, pinkish flesh-colour. Upper mandible, and terminal half of lower mandible, black; rest of the latter lead colour, becoming lighter at the base. Inside of mouth the same; soles dirty-brown; legs and claws black.

666. NUCIFRAGA HEMISPILA. Himalayan Nutcracker.

I shot a solitary specimen on the ground, at the watershed of the Balasun and Little Rungeet rivers, on the march to Tongloo in April 1862, starting from Darjeeling.

Mahasoo, Oct. 2, 1866. This bird is apparently not uncommon on this range, though very scarce close to Simla.

Length 14·75; wing 8·5; tail 5·5; tarsus rather more than 1·5; spread of foot underneath 2·25; bill from front 1·75, from gape 2·125; extent 24; irides dark-brown. The bill and legs of this specimen are covered with a black pitch-like substance.

In this female the head is jet-black; wings black, tending to brown on the tertials and upper wing-coverts; the tail has twelve feathers, the middle pair black, the rest with tips of pure white, increasing in length from the middle outwardly till the exterior pair are half white. Under tail-coverts more white, the rest of the bird brown, with white centres to the breast-feathers.

The Himalayan Nutcracker is tolerably abundant in the ilex-woods about Fagoo dāk-bungalow. It is generally seen in pairs, but is exceedingly wary and difficult of approach. Its loud harsh scream may frequently be heard from the bungalow itself, and the bird occasionally seen flying from tree to tree, or soaring, now and then, Flycatcher-like; but one can seldom get within shot of it. At Annandale I once saw a pair about the gardens. They probably visit the woods there during the winter months, when driven down by heavy snow.

Dr. Stolickza had several of these birds in his collection (Ibis, 1867, p. 142).

669. *GARRULUS BISPECULARIS* *. Himalayan Jay.

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Gape.	Extent.
A.	13.25	6.75	6	1.625	1		17
B.	12.375	6.125	5.5	1.5	.9375	1.25	17 to 17.5
C.	13	6.5	5.75	1.375	1	1.25	18.25

Spread of foot in the last specimen, shot 25 Sept. 1866, is 2.125; the irides are purplish, surrounded by a yellowish-brown ring. In the second the bill is dark lead-colour; legs flesh-colour, claws a little darker; irides deep brown. This specimen, a female, I shot at Fagoo, 4th Aug. 1866, out of a flock of seven or eight, which were not particularly wary. In the first specimen, which was shot by my brother at Mahasoo, 12th May 1866, the legs were pale flesh-colour, with darker claws, and the bill nearly black.

670. *GARRULUS LANCEOLATUS*. Black-throated Jay.

Very abundant about Simla, and perhaps one of the most characteristic birds of the place. "Black-throated" is a misnomer when applied to this species; for the throat-feathers are white. Bill pale bluish horn-colour, legs and claws lead-colour; irides pinkish brown. Length 13.25; wing 6.5; tail 6.75; tarsus 1.5; bill from front barely 1, the upper mandible overhanging the lower one considerably. The head is well crested. Another specimen measures as follows:—Length 13.375; wing 6.375; tail 6.5; tarsus 1.5; bill from front .875, from gape 1.1875.

671. *UROCISSA OCCIPITALIS* †. Red-billed Blue Magpie.

Simla, June 15, 1866. Specimen in the flesh. Bill orange-red; legs coral-red, with dusky claws. Length 25.5; wing 7.625; tail 16.5; tarsus 8.875; spread of foot underneath

* [Prof. Schlegel (*op. cit.* p. 60) regards "*G. sinensis*, Gould" (P. Z. S. 1862, p. 282), which does not seem to have been described in due form, as specifically identical with this species.—ED.]

† [Respecting the confused synonymy of this species, compare the observations of Prof. Schleg. (Mus. P.-B., *Coraces*, pp. 69, 70), who, however, deems the Indian and Chinese birds specifically identical. If they be regarded as distinct, Mr. Blyth's name above given should be applied to the first, as is done by Dr. Jerdon in his 'Appendix' (B. Ind. iii. p. 873).—ED.]

2.125; bill from front 1.375, height at base .6875. The fully fledged young bird has a great deal of dark purple about the bill, which evidently only acquires its orange-red in the mature adult. In two specimens of the young now before me one has the bill nearly black, and the other much the same colour, but with orange-yellow at the tip, and along the ridges of both mandibles. The under wing-coverts, and quills of wings underneath in these are light saffron-yellow; and the lower parts generally are of the same hue, somewhat lighter in tint; legs dull red, claws darker.

672. *UROCISSA CUCULLATA*. Yellow-billed Blue Magpie.

I obtained one in April 1862, on the road to Tongloo, at an elevation of about 8000 feet.

At Simla, in July 1866, my shikaree brought a somewhat damaged specimen of this bird, which was the only one I ever saw there. At first I took it for the preceding species, until happening to put all my specimens of the genus side by side, I was at once struck by the difference of colour in the bill; but otherwise the two birds very nearly resemble each other.

673. *CISSA SINENSIS*. Green Jay.

Darjeeling collection, 1862, obtained at an elevation of about 8000 feet. I have seen specimens collected in Tipperah*.

674. *DENDROCITTA RUFA* †. Common Indian Magpie.

Common about Barrackpore, where it breeds. Rare in Maun-

* There seems to be some error in the dimensions assigned to the length and expanse of this bird by Dr. Jerdon.

† [Lord Walden has been good enough to send us the following note:—"The name *rufus* was given to the common Indian Magpie by Latham (Ind. Orn. i. p. 161), and not by Scopoli, although generally attributed to the latter by all writers (Sundevall excepted) since Mr. Blyth (J. A. S. B. 1846, p. 30) quoted Scopoli as the authority. Latham described his 'Rufous Crow' (Synopsis. Suppl. i. p. 84) from Sommerat's description and plate (Voy. Ind. ii. p. 186, pl. 106) of his 'Pie rousse de la Chine'—a plate which Scopoli omitted to notice in his paper on Sommerat's specimens (Fl. & Faun. Insub. ii. p. 84). Latham's name *rufus* takes precedence, though by a few pages only, of his name *ragabundus*; but this last designation, founded on Lady Impey's drawings, will have to be adopted for the Indian bird, should a Chinese representative be discovered differing specifically from the Indian form."—ED.]

bhoom, and also about Moulmein, where I obtained a specimen, Sept. 23, 1865. Length 16·375; wing 5·875; tail 10·125; tarsus 1·1875; bill from front 1·125, height at base ·5625; irides dark brown, bill and legs dark lead-colour. I observed this bird also about Umballah in 1866.

676. *DENDROCITTA SINENSIS*. Himalayan Magpie.

Common in small parties about Darjeeling. It was also not uncommon about Simla.

The dimensions of three specimens in the flesh are as follows :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Gape.	Extent.
A.	16·375	5·75	10	1·1875	1·25		
B.	17·125	5·875	10·125	1·0625	1·1875		16·5
C.	17·	5·875	10·5	1·0625	1·		16·

These dimensions slightly exceed those given by Dr. Jerdon, especially in the length of the tail.

677. *DENDROCITTA FRONTALIS*. Black-browed Magpie.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. One specimen.

679. *FREGILUS HIMALAYANUS*. Himalayan Chough.

I procured a few specimens of this bird at Simla, but from a native shikaree.

Of *Pyrhocorax alpinus* I was not able to get a single example (*cf.* Ibis, 1867, p. 137).

681. *STURNUS VULGARIS*. Common Starling.

Abundant at Umballah in January 1866.

Dimensions of four specimens in the flesh :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Extent.
A.	9	5	2·625	1·125	1·0625	14·5
B.	9	5·0625	2·5	1·125	1	14·75
C.	8·875	5·0625	2·625	1·12	·95	14·85
D.	..	5·25	2·75	1·25	1·12	15·1

Legs chocolate-colour, with black claws.

Bill nearly black, or dark horn-colour.

683. *STURNOPASTOR CONTRA*. Pied Starling.

One of the commonest birds about Barrackpore, where it breeds. Rarer in Maunbhoom, and still more so at Umballah.

Bancoorah, April 22, 1865. I noticed a pair beginning to build in a teak tree, in an upper fork of which was a kite's nest with a young one in it. The Starlings have chosen a low bough, and do not appear to care for the kites. The tree is, moreover, totally devoid of leaves.

685. *ACRIDOTHERES GINGINIANUS*. Bank-Myna.

Abundant at Umballah in November 1866.

686. *ACRIDOTHERES FUSCUS*. Dark Myna.

Moulmein, Aug. 26, 1865. Length 9·25; wing 4·75; tail 2·875; bill from front ·875; tarsus 1·5; irides yellow. As is the case with this, all the Burmese representatives of Indian birds appeared smaller (*cf.* P. Z. S. 1866, p. 552).

687. *TEMENUCHUS PAGODARUM*. Black-headed Myna.

Dr. Jerdon's description of this well-known and common bird is somewhat brief. The "white edge near the shoulder" of which he speaks is caused by the under wing-coverts, which are white, and the quills are greyish. The belly, under tail-coverts, and thigh-coverts are greyish-white. The irides are white; and there is a triangular patch of bare white skin behind the eye, between the ear-coverts (the feathers of which are lanceolate) and crest. The tarsus and feet bright yellow.

A male bird of this species in confinement, when excited or pleased, was fond of erecting its crest and puffing out all its breast-feathers, spreading its tail, and uttering a few pleasing notes. It was exceedingly tame, and allowed to roam about. It would fly to me when called, and perch on my finger. It ate anything soft: rice soaked in milk was its usual food; but it also devours with avidity grasshoppers, moths, ants occasionally, small insects, and soft fruit. The species is rare in Maunbhoom and at Umballah.

688. *TEMENUCHUS MALABARICUS*. Grey-headed Myna.

Common about Barrackpore in small parties, rarer in Maunbhoom.

690. *PASTOR ROSEUS*. The Rose-coloured Starling.

At Barrackpore, in February 1864, this species occurred feed-

ing in small parties on the flowers of the "Semul" or cotton-tree (*Bombax heptaphyllum*).

Perulia, Maunbhoom, April 1864. Enormous flocks of these birds may be seen every evening flying to the islands in the lake here, where they roost in trees, together with *Acridotheres tristis* and *Sturnopastor contra*, Herons and Cormorants; but the flocks of *P. roseus* are by far the largest, and, when they rise suddenly from the trees on hearing the report of a gun, create a rushing sound, and appear like a vast animated cloud. They fly, too, much faster than the allied species, and may be easily distinguished from the latter by their arrowy flight, which is very similar to that of the common English Starling. They have only lately been noticed here, and, as the breeding-season of most birds is already far advanced, can scarcely have time, one would think, to get to Western Asia, as supposed by Dr. Jerdon, for the purpose of nidification.

692. EULABES RELIGIOSA. Southern Hill-Myna.

Caged specimens of this bird are frequently seen in Maunbhoom, which are said to be captured in the hilly country to the south of the district. Col. Tickell does not, however, include it in his list of the birds of Borabhoom and Dhulbhoom (J. A. S. B. ii. p. 569).

694. PLOCEUS BAYA. Common Weaverbird.

Common in Maunbhoom, near Calcutta, Burmah, and near Umballah, as far as my experience goes. At Moulmein it associates with Sparrows, about stables and out-buildings.

699. MUNIA UNDULATA. Spotted Munia.

Observed at Barrackpore in 1864, in Maunbhoom 1855, and Burmah 1865 (*cf.* P. Z. S. 1866, p. 552).

701. MUNIA STRIATA. White-backed Munia.

At Ramnuggur, Maunbhoom, March 13, 1864, I fired into a flock of these birds feeding on chaff in a village, killing four.

The following are the dimensions of two of them :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Extent.
A.	4.75	2.1	1.75	.5	6.5
B.	4.25	2.1	1.5	.5	6.375

The first, apparently the older bird, is slightly lineated with brown on the belly and flanks.

The upper mandible is blue-black, the lower light leaden-blue; legs plumbeous. A nest of this species (like that of *M. malacca* described by Dr. Jerdon), containing only three eggs, was brought to me on April 3rd.

702. *MUNIA ACUTICAUDA*. Himalayan Munia.

(Conf. P. Z. S. 1866, p.552.) Tolerably common in gardens near Moulmein. A specimen in the flesh, obtained in Sept. 1865, measured as follows:—Length 4·625; wing barely 2; tail about 1·7; tarsus ·5; bill from front ·4375; middle tail-feathers barely exceed the rest. Upper mandible dark horn-colour, lower light leaden-blue; legs dull plumbeous.

703. *MUNIA MALABARICA*. Plain Brown Munia.

Rarely met with in Maunbhoom, where I only procured one or two specimens.

704. *ESTRElda AMANDAVA*. Red Waxbill.

Only seen once in Maunbhoom, in 1864.

706. *PASSER INDICUS*. Indian House-Sparrow.

Common at Barrackpore, in Maunbhoom, and at Umballah. At Simla in 1866 three specimens of a Sparrow were brought in, not at all like the adult of *P. indicus* of the plains; and all those I noticed at Simla were apparently of this form. I sub-join the dimensions :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Extent.
A.	5·25	2·625	1·87	·875	·375	8
B.	5·375	2·75	1·875	·875	·4375	8
C.	5·5	2·75	2	·6875	·4375	8

The whole of the under parts in these are dirty white; the first differs from the other two in being much darker on the upper parts; bill and feet lead-colour, the latter lighter; the upper parts rufous, with the usual markings on the wings. The second and third have the bill stouter than the first, the markings and colour of back much lighter; no supercilium or wing bands; bill and legs more flesh-coloured. I at first thought these birds were females of *P. cinnamomeus*; but there was no

trace of yellow below, and the markings on the back also differ slightly.

708. *PASSER CINNAMOMEUS*. Cinnamon-headed Sparrow.

Very abundant at Simla. The dimensions of those killed 11th June are :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Extent.
♂	5·375	2·875	2 to 2·125	·6875	·5	8·125
♀	5·375	2·625	2	·6875	·4375	7·5
♀	5·375	2·625	2	·6875	·4375	7·5

Irides brown; bill black; legs light brown, claws darker. The females differ from the male in having no cinnamon colour on the upper part, except a slight tinge of it on the shoulders and upper tail-coverts. They have a well-defined light-yellow supercilium, but a mere trace of black on the throat; and the under parts are altogether less bright than in the male; the white wing-band also is less conspicuously marked. The species feed on a kind of purple, oval, aloe-like berry growing abundantly on low thorny bushes on the hillside above Annandale.

710. *PASSER MONTANUS*. Mountain-Sparrow.

Common in Burmah, where the natives take great care of it. The outer husk of a cocoa-nut is cut in two and tied together again, with a small aperture left on one side for the entrance of the bird. Several of these thus prepared are hung under the eaves of the house, and sometimes inside the (*quasi*) rooms, and the birds breed in them. The object appears to be a purely religious one; the Burmese think that by thus taking care of these little birds they themselves in their next transmigration will, under the form of Sparrows, receive kindness in the same proportion that they now bestow it. This idea appears also to hold good with regard to other domestic pets, and is, doubtless, of Buddhist origin.

711. *PASSER FLAVICOLLIS*. Yellow-necked Sparrow.

Not uncommon in Maunbhoom, where it breeds early in April, laying four eggs, much like those of the Common Sparrow, but darker, and more spotted. The bill, legs, and claws are

horny ash-colour, the legs slightly tinged with fleshy pink. Length nearly 6 inches in most specimens.

713. *EMBERIZA CIA* (?)*, White-browed Bunting.

This bird, which is abundant about Simla, is found to frequent gardens in all parts of the station, feeding of a morning on the ground, invariably in pairs, and flying up into young fruit-trees when disturbed. Dimensions as follows :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Extent.
	6·625	3	3	·75	·4375	9·25
♂ ..	6·5	3·375	3	·75	·4375	9·6
	6·5	3·125	3	·75	·4375	9·25

Bill bluish lead-colour; legs dull yellow. The sexes, according to Col. Tytler, are identical in plumage. A nest was brought to me at Fagoo dâk-bungalow, on August 4th, 1866, containing two eggs, which have much of the colour of those of *Fringilla caelebs*, with markings as in *E. citrinella*; that is, they are of a pale pinkish blue-green, with blotches and streaks of claret-colour. They measure ·8125 by ·625. The nest is fairly made, of grass lined with hair, and was, I believe, found in a low thick bush.

717. *EMBERIZA SPODIOCEPHALA*. Black-faced Bunting.

One specimen, Darjeeling collection, 1862.

718. *EMBERIZA STEWARTI*. White-capped Bunting.

Dr. Stoliczka's collections (*cf.* Ibis, 1867, p. 140) from the interior, contained several specimens; one, a male, given to me, is marked "Chergaon."

724. *MELOPHUS MELANICTERUS*. Crested Black Bunting.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. Simla collection, 1866.

At Simla in 1866 it was tolerably abundant, and it was also found by the late Dr. Scott feeding in numbers on the ground at Umballah.

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Extent.
♂	7	3·375	2·875	·75	·5625	9·25
♀	6·75	3·125	2·75	·8125	·5	9·75

* *Cf.* Ibis, 1867, p. 141. [Specimens from Simla should be closely compared with European examples, before the species to which they belong can be accurately determined.—ED.]

Bill reddish-brown ; upper mandible darker, overlapping the lower at the tip ; legs dark reddish-brown ; claws nearly black.

725. *HESPERIPHONA ICTEROIDES*. Black-and-yellow Grosbeak.

I saw this species for the first time, and obtained specimens, at Fagoo, fifteen miles from Simla, in August 1866. It frequents the tops of the highest pine-trees, and, as stated by Dr. Adams (P. Z. S. 1859, p. 178), the call-note is "loud and plaintive," and can only be described as a loud rolling "tree," somewhat drawn out. Several may be heard at the same time calling to each other. Though apparently abundant about Fagoo, one does not often see the bird, in spite of the brilliant plumage of the male ; they sit so still and quiet. I shot one male on a low bush, near the ground, on the Hindoostan and Thibet road, not far from Fagoo. The bill in both sexes is pale sea-green ; irides brown, and legs flesh-colour. Dimensions as follows :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Spread foot.	Extent.
♂	9	5.25	3.875	1	.9375	1.875	14.5
♀	9	5	3.5	1	.9375	1.875	14

727. *MYCEROBAS MELANOXANTHUS*. Spotted-winged Grosbeak.

This is a very peculiar-looking bird, the head, with its enormously massive bill, giving it a top-heavy appearance. Irises dark brown ; bill and legs bluish lead-colour, darker at the base and tip of the upper mandible and on the claws. Dimensions :—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Bill.	Spread foot.	Extent.
♂	8.875	5.25	3	.875	.9375	1.625	13
♀	8.875	5	3	.75	.9375		14

This species frequents the "holly-trees" (*Ilex*) which abound in the partial clearings on the hillsides, but is apparently scarcer than the preceding. Dr. Jerdon's English name is scarcely appropriate ; for there is no spotted appearance except in the lower parts of the female, a transverse white bar across the wing of the male hardly giving the idea of a "spot."

729. *PYRRHULA ERYTHROCEPHALA*. Red-headed Bullfinch.
Darjeeling collection, 1862. Three specimens.

730. *PYRRHULA ERITHACUS*. Red-breasted Bullfinch.

I came across a flock of this new species on my way up Mount Tongloo in April 1862. There were two males and several females picking about the bushes near the path. The females all escaped, but I secured both the males, though one was too much damaged to preserve; the other I sent to Mr. Blyth, who described it in 'The Ibis' for 1862 (pp. 389, 390), and in the following year furnished its portrait (Ibis, 1863, pl. x). This was the only occasion on which I observed the species. The elevation was about 9000 feet.

731. *PYRRHULA NIPALENSIS*. Brown Bullfinch.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. Three specimens.

733. *PYRRHOPLECTES EPAULETTA*, Hodg. Gold-headed Black Bullfinch.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. One specimen.

735. *HÆMATOSPIZA SIPAHI*. Scarlet Grosbeak.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. Two specimens.

738. *CARPODACUS ERYTHRINUS*. Common Rose Finch.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. Four specimens. In September 1866 I observed it abundantly about Simla, but was unable to procure any specimens.

740. *PROPASSER THURA*. White-browed Rose Finch.

About a mile from the summit of Mount Tongloo, in 1862, where they associate in flocks, I procured specimens of this handsome bird, which was at first supposed by Mr. Blyth to be a new species, *P. frontalis* (J. A. S. B. 1863, p. 458); but he has since (Ibis, 1867, p. 44) referred it to *P. thura*.

746. *PROCARDUELIS NIPALENSIS*, Hodg. Dark Rose Finch.

Darjeeling collection, 1862. One specimen.

750. *CHRYSOMITRIS SPINOIDES*. Himalayan Siskin.

I came across this elegant little Finch for the first time at Simla, in the summer of 1866, and was so much attracted by its sprightly manners and lively notes, that I immediately manufactured a pair of clap-nets, borrowed a call-bird (which had been knocked down by a soldier at Dugshaie with a stone, and

put into a cage), and set to work in earnest. My greatest difficulty was in finding a spot sufficiently level; but at last I succeeded, by paying for the removal of a standing crop of millet in a field; and, placing my call-bird in a wire rat-trap, I at last enticed an unwary couple between the nets. Then, with brace-and call-birds complete, I caught between thirty and forty in a few days, some of which were given to numerous friends; and I started for England with ten, out of which six arrived in safety, and four of them are at the present moment in the Zoological Gardens. This is, I believe, the first time this species has been introduced into England.

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Extent.
♂ ..	5·375	2·937	1·85	·5625	8·25
♂ ..	5·25	3	1·875	·5625	8·25
♀ ..	5	3	1·75	·5625	8

The bill is strong and triangular, measuring from the front ·375, and from the gape ·4375, and is of a pinkish flesh-colour; the legs are darker flesh-colour, with lighter soles and brownish claws. The spread of the foot is ·125. About Simla the species is not uncommon; the males are generally seen seated on the tip of a Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*), singing at each other.

At Fagoo, August 4th, 1866, I found Siskins extremely abundant—all in pairs, and shot a female in the act of building her nest in a thick epiphytic clump of vegetation, growing at the extremity of the bough of an *Ilex*. These “hollies” are trees with a trunk a foot or more in diameter, and grow to the height of 30 or 40 feet, like short stunted oaks. The usual call of the Siskin in flight reminds me of the Common Linnet; but the song and call of the male (both when at rest, and in its peculiar soaring flight during the breeding-season) remind me much of the Greenfinch; it has a note also very similar to the “bzee-ee-ee” of that bird. The song of the male is very sweet, but frequently ends rather harshly, with the “bzee” note repeated several times in succession.

The young birds of the year did not appear until late at Simla, my first being caught at Mahasoo on September 29th. I had, however, as early as the beginning of that month seen a specimen in Dr. Stoliczka’s collection, made in the interior. The

young have the superciliary streak, throat, wing-band, rump, and basal outer webs of the tail yellow; the head and back greenish-brown, striated longitudinally with dark marks; the breast, flanks, and under tail-coverts are also similarly striated; abdomen greenish-yellow; wings and tail dark brown, the tertials and coverts of the former edged with greyish-yellow. Bill and legs pinkish. The sexes are not distinguishable in this plumage, which was that in which three of my specimens in the Zoological Gardens were clothed on leaving India in January 1867; they have, however, since moulted.

751. *METOPONIA PUSILLA*. Gold-headed Finch.

This is the "Câbulce Bullfinch" of residents at Simla and Umballah, to which latter large numbers are brought in the winter months by the Cabul merchants, in cages, together with Goldfinches and other birds.

754. *MIRAFRA ASSAMICA*. Bengal Bush-Lark.

Not uncommon in Maunbhoom. It flies, on first rising, somewhat like a Quail, then slowly, with a peculiar soaring flight, showing the rounded wing before alighting—in this respect like *Pyrhulauda grisea* as described by Dr. Jerdon (B. Ind. ii. p. 422). A specimen in the flesh, obtained March 9th, 1865, measured:—Length 6; wing 3·25; tail 2; extent 9·75; tarsus 1.

756. *MIRAFRA ERYTHROPTERA*. Red-winged Bush-Lark.

Rare in Maunbhoom.

At Umballah, November 13th, 1866, I shot a specimen in a small enclosed garden. It alighted on the ground after being first disturbed, and squatted under a low bush, trying, when wounded, to get refuge in a rat-hole. Length 5·125; wing 2·7; tail 1·75; tarsus ·87; spread foot 1·125; hind claw ·25; bill from front ·375, from gape ·5; extent 9·25. Lower mandible flesh-colour, upper mandible dark horn-colour.

758. *AMMOMANES PHENICURA*. Rufous-tailed Finch-Lark.

This species has a very large, robust bill, and excessive extent of wing for its size. It sings very sweetly when flying, and generally perches on the dry hills near the station of Morar, on the

tops of little mounds or hillocks. The flight is somewhat lark-like. Three or four birds were observed at the same time; but they are not common. Bill and legs horny brown. Irides brown. Dimensions:—length 6·75; wing 4·125; tail 2·5; tarsus ·8125; spread foot 1·25; bill from front ·5, from gape ·7; extent 13.

760. *PYRRHULAUDA GRISEA*. Black-bellied Finch-Lark.

Rare about Barrackpore; common in Maunbhoom. I can confirm Prof. Sundevall's account of its habits (*Ann. Mag. N. H.* 1846, xviii. p. 259) as noticed by Dr. Jerdon, having seen it in Maunbhoom in February 1863, singing in the air with expanded wings.

761. *CALANDRELLA BRACHYDACTYLA*. Short-toed Lark.

Common in Maunbhoom in the cold weather. Specimens killed at Kashurghur have a large blackish patch on each side of the breast above.

A specimen from Morar, December 1866, measured:—Length 6·75; wing 3·875; tail 2·5; tarsus ·9375; spread of foot 1·25; bill from front ·375, from gape ·5; extent 11·5. The tertials are equal in length to the primaries.

761 *bis*. *MELANOCORYPHA TORQUATA*. Large Ring-necked Lark.

At Umballah, November 8th, 1866, I purchased from a native a pair of fine specimens alive, which were said to have been brought from Cabul. I have never met with the bird in a wild state in the north of India, although it is said to occur there by Mr. Hume (*Ibis*, 1867, p. 471)*. In general appearance this is a very striking and conspicuous species, both from its size and resemblance to a large Ringed Plover. I attempted to bring this pair of birds home alive for the Zoological Gardens, and got them in safety round the Cape, when they both died in one night. I did not hear them attempt to sing, the whole time I had them; but the natives say that they do so beautifully (*cf.* Jerdon, *B. Ind.* ii. p. 427).

* [Lord Walden informs us that he has received many specimens of this species shot in the neighbourhood of Umballah.—ED.]

765. *SPIZALAUDA DEVA*. Small-crested Lark.

Abundant at Umballah. I put up three or four of these birds out of low cultivation; their flight is somewhat hovering, like that of a *Mirafra*. Length 6·5; wing 3·625; tail 2·25; tarsus barely 1; spread foot 1·5; bill from front ·625, from gape ·8125; extent 12. This specimen agrees with Dr. Jerdon's description; but its measurements are considerably greater than he gives.

767. *ALAUDA GULGULA*. Indian Sky-Lark.

Near Barrackpore I once heard this bird singing in mid air and bringing into its song imitations of the calls of several other birds.

Moulmein, September 1865.—A specimen in the flesh measured:—Length 6·25; wing 3·25; tail 2·375; extent 9; tarsus 1; bill from front ·5625; hind toe and claw ·9375. Another, in moulting-plumage, apparently a young bird of the year:—Length barely 6·5; wing 3·1875; tail 2·5; extent 9; tarsus ·9375; hind toe and claw ·9375; bill from front ·5625.

769. *GALERITA CRISTATA*. Large-crested Lark.

Umballah, January 1866.—Length 7·5; wing 4·625; tail 3; extent 13; tarsus ·9375; bill from front ·4375; hind toe and claw 1·0625; claw alone ·625. Irides dark brown. Bill dark brown at the tip and along the ridge of the upper mandible, the rest pale horn-colour; legs dull fleshy brown; claws darker. The tail extends an inch beyond the tips of the wings; lower parts fulvous white.

XIV.—*Note on Hypocolius ampelinus*, Bp.

By Dr. M. T. VON HEUGLIN*.

(Plate V.)

THE genus *Hypocolius* was established by the late Prince Bonaparte, in his well-known "*Conspectus Generum Avium*" (i. p. 336); and the only species, *H. ampelinus*, was described by him from two specimens in the Leyden collection. These specimens were brought by the French traveller Botta, not from

* [Kindly communicated by Dr. Harflaub.—ED.]